



CRAIG-FEINSTEIN NATIONAL SAFE PLACE WEEK RESOLUTION PASSES SENATE

Public-private partnership promotes well-being of nation's youth

March 12, 2004

WASHINGTON, DC – A resolution sponsored by Idaho Senator Larry Craig and Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) designating the week of March 14, 2004 as “National Safe Place Week,” passed the Senate unanimously today. The resolution recognizes the efforts of an innovative program designed to assist youth and families in crisis.

“The resolution celebrates this outstanding program and also honors the efforts of thousands of dedicated Safe Place volunteers, who selflessly devote time and resources to protect our nation’s young people,” said Craig. **“I hope we can use this week to help raise awareness of the number of troubled young people in our nation and provide more youth and their families the knowledge that help is often right in their own neighborhood.”**

Craig and Feinstein sponsored legislation to designate “National Safe Place Week” for the week beginning March 14, 2004 in order to draw attention to the program.

Senator Feinstein stated, **“Since its inception, the Safe Place program has provided refuge to over 71,000 young people across the country. In my home state, almost 6,000 young Californians have visited 1,091 different Safe Place sites. I’m pleased to honor this outstanding program and hope that it continues to grow – every young person in America should have a place to turn when facing a difficult problem.”**

Project Safe Place, as the program is called, began in Louisville, Kentucky in 1983 as an outreach effort of the YMCA Center for Youth Alternatives -- a short term shelter for youth at risk. Its success has prompted the implementation of this youth shelter outreach program in over a hundred cities throughout the United States.

The program works by creating a network of “Safe Places”: businesses and public locations that display the Safe Place logo on their premises. Any youth in trouble knows that he or she can enter a location bearing this sign and request help. An employee will provide the youth with a secure place to wait while the local youth shelter is contacted. The shelter then dispatches a trained volunteer to the Safe Place site to offer assistance and provide transportation to the shelter if necessary.

More information is available at <http://www.safeplaceservices.org/>.